

I. FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION

Good nutrition, including a diet low in saturated fats and at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day, plays a key role in maintaining good health. Improving the American diet could extend the productive life span of Americans and reduce the occurrence of chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, some types of cancers, diabetes, and osteoporosis.¹

It has been known for many years that diet plays a large role in the quality of long-term health. Among adults who do not drink excessively or smoke, diet is the most significant controllable risk factor that determines their health status. It is widely accepted that a significant percentage of all cancer deaths can be attributed to poor dietary habits.

One of the most important dietary habits is the consumption of at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Analysis of the 2005 Arizona BRFSS showed that 76.3 percent of respondents reported that they consume less than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day (Figure I-1). This falls short of *Healthy Arizona 2010* Objective 2.1, which sets a target of increasing the proportion of Arizonans aged two years and older who consume at least two daily servings of fruit and at least three daily servings of vegetables (with at least one-third being dark green or deep yellow vegetables) to at least 50 percent.²

Survey Questions:

How often do you drink fruit juices such as orange, grapefruit, or tomato?

How often do you eat (fruit, green salad, potatoes, carrots)?

Not counting carrots, potatoes, or salad, how many servings of vegetables do you usually eat?

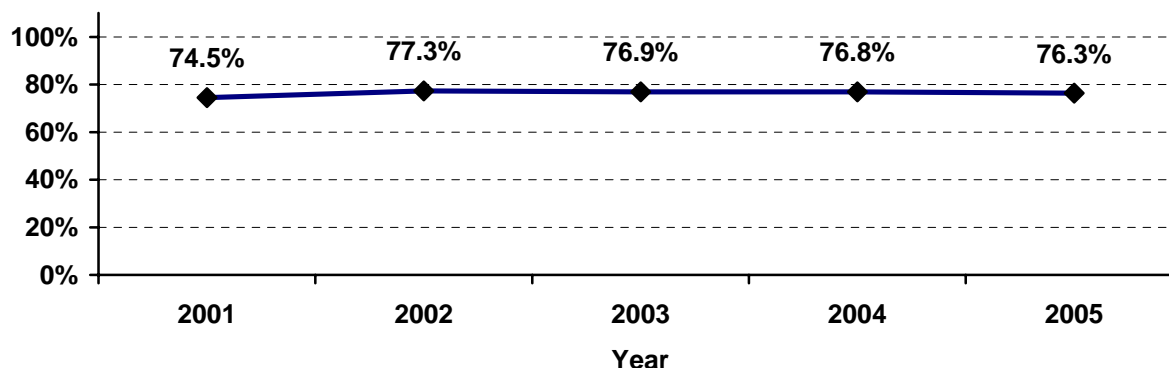


Figure I-1. Percentage of Arizona BRFSS respondents who reported consuming less than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day in 2001-2005.

Males (80.9 percent, an improvement from the 2004 rate) were much less likely to consume less than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day than females (71.8 percent, a slight increase over the rate in 2004). Respondents 35-44 years old were least likely to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables (80.8 percent, increasing from the 2004 rate) followed by persons 18-24 years (80.1 percent, a decrease over the 2004 rate). High school graduates were less likely (81.1 percent) to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables followed by those with less than a high school education (79.0 percent). Both of these categories experienced a decrease from the 2004 rates. Arizonans making \$35,000-\$49,999 had the

highest percentage of people who did not eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables (77.6 percent) followed by respondents making less than \$15,000 (76.9 percent). The percentages for both income groups decreased over the rates in 2004. Non-White respondents were less likely to eat five servings each day (78.4 percent, about the same as in 2004) than White respondents (75.7 percent, decreasing from the previous year). Hispanics (79.3 percent) were less likely to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables than Non-Hispanics (75.6 percent). The percentages for both ethnic groups improved over the 2004 rates.

References

1. The Burden of Chronic Diseases and Their Risk Factors: National and State Perspectives. CDC. 2004.
2. Department of Health Services. Arizona 2010: Collaborating for a Healthier Future. 2001.

Arizona BRFSS: Respondents Consuming Less Than Five Servings Of Fruits And Vegetables Per Day			
GROUPS	WEIGHTED PERCENT		2005 N*
	2004	2005	
<u>Sex</u>			
Male	85.9	80.9	1,355
Female	70.2	71.8	2,042
<u>Age</u>			
18-24	86.1	80.1	170
25-34	82.2	77.6	443
35-44	76.5	80.8	591
45-54	78.6	79.3	660
55-64	75.3	71.3	612
65+	69.4	67.8	921
<u>Education</u>			
Less than High School	82.8	79.0	451
High School Graduate/GED	83.3	81.1	997
Some College/Tech School	77.1	74.5	1,009
College Grad	71.7	72.8	934
<u>Income</u>			
<\$15,000	78.5	76.9	363
\$15,000-\$24,999	77.5	74.8	989
\$25,000-\$34,999	74.3	74.8	408
\$35,000-\$49,999	78.1	77.6	548
≥\$50,000	77.0	74.5	936
<u>Race</u>			
White	77.7	75.7	2,281
Non-White	78.1	78.4	1,072
<u>Ethnicity</u>			
Hispanic	79.8	79.3	849
Non-Hispanic	77.3	75.6	2,527

Table I-1. BRFSS survey results: Respondents who reported consuming less than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day. *N is unweighted.